In the Claims

What is claimed is:

1. (currently amended) An improved lacing system, comprising:

a clasp having an anchoring end and a lace end, said lace end adapted to hold a lace;

said anchoring end and said lace end being provided by a single continuous length of material;

said anchoring end having a first part and a second part where said first and second parts are movable away from and toward one another;

~~said clasp being a single unit of material;~~

a receiver having a first receptacle and a second receptacle for engaging said first and second parts, respectively; and

wherein said clasp is removably joinable to said receiver when said first and second parts are engaged with said first and second receptacles and, when said first and second parts are disengaged with said first and second receptacles, said clasp is separable from said receiver.

2. (original) The lacing system according to claim 1, wherein said lace end further comprises a holder for holding the lace.

3. (previously amended) The lacing system according to claim 1, wherein said receiver further comprises a hook.

4. (original) The lacing system according to claim 2, wherein said holder further comprises a loop.

5. (previously amended) An improved lacing system, comprising:

a clasp having an anchoring end and a lace end, said lace end adapted to hold a lace;

said anchoring end having a first part and a second part where said first and second parts are movable away from and toward one another;

a receiver having a first receptacle and a second receptacle for engaging said first and second parts, respectively; and

wherein said clasp is removably joinable to said receiver when said first and second parts are engaged with said first and second receptacles and, when said first and second parts are disengaged with said first and second receptacles, said clasp is separable from said receiver;

wherein said receiver further comprises a cylinder.

6. (original) The lacing system according to claim 1, wherein said receiver further comprises a shaft with bored ends.

7. (original) The lacing system according to claim 1, wherein said first and second parts are, when an opening force is applied to said clasp, moved away from one another.

8. (original) The lacing system according to claim 7, wherein said first and second parts are biased toward one another such that, when the opening force is removed, said first and second parts automatically move toward one another.

9. (original) The lacing system according to claim 1, wherein said receiver is secured to a side of an aperture of an item to be closed.

10. (original) The lacing system according to claim 1, wherein said receiver is secured to an eyelet of an item to be closed.

11. (currently amended) A method for providing an improved lacing system, comprising the steps of:

~~providing a clasp being of a single unit of material;~~

providing an ~~a receiver~~ anchoring end and a lace end from ~~the~~ a single ~~unit of~~ continuous length of material;

extending a first part and a second part from the ~~receiver~~ anchoring end;

extending a holder from the lace end;

providing a receiver having a first receptacle and a second receptacle for receiving the first and second parts, respectively; and

wherein the clasp is removably joinable to the receiver for closing an item and the clasp is separable from the receiver for opening the item.

12. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of engaging the first and second parts with the first and second receptacles, respectively, for removably joining the clasp and receiver together.

13. (original) The method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of disengaging the first and second parts from the first and second receptacles, respectively, for separating the clasp from the receiver.

14. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of moving the first and second parts toward one another and into the first and second receptacles, respectively, to removably join the clasp with the receiver.

15. (original) The method according to claim 14, further comprising the step of moving the first and second parts away from one another and out of the first and second receptacles, respectively, to separate the clasp from the receiver.

16. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of securing the receiver to a side of an aperture of an item to be closed.

17. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of securing the receiver to an eyelet.

18. (original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of passing a lace through the holder.

19. (previously added)An improved lacing system, comprising:

a clasp having an anchoring end and a lace end, said lace end adapted to hold a lace;

said anchoring end having a first part and a second part where said first and second parts are movable away from and toward one another;

a receiver having a first receptacle and a second receptacle for engaging said first and second parts, respectively; and

wherein said clasp is removably joinable to said receiver when said first and second parts are engaged with said first and second receptacles and, when said first and second parts are disengaged with said first and second receptacles, said clasp is separable from said receiver;

wherein said first and second parts are, when an opening force is applied to said clasp, moved away from one another.

20. (currently amended)The ~~method~~ lacing system according to claim 19, wherein said first and second parts are biased toward one another such that, when the opening force is removed, said first and second parts automatically move toward one another.

21. (previously added)A method for providing an improved lacing system, comprising the steps of:

providing a clasp having a receiver end and a lace end;

extending a first part and a second part from the receiver end;

extending a holder from the lace end;

providing a receiver having a first receptacle and a second receptacle for receiving the first and second parts, respectively;

moving the first and second parts toward one another and into the first and second receptacles, respectively, to removably join the clasp with the receiver; and

wherein the clasp is removably joinable to the receiver for closing an item and the clasp is separable from the receiver for opening the item.

22. (previously added) The method according to claim 21, further comprising the step of moving the first and second parts away from one another and out of the first and second receptacles, respectively, to separate the clasp from the receiver.